

UNITED STATES DISTRICT COURT
EASTERN DISTRICT OF MICHIGAN
SOUTHERN DIVISION

UNITED STATES OF AMERICA

CRIMINAL NO. 05-80955

vs.

HON. DAVID M. LAWSON

DEMETRIUS FLENORY,

Defendant.

**United States' Supplemental Exhibit to Its Response Opposing the
Defendant's Motion for Compassionate Release or, Alternatively,
Request or Recommendation for Home Confinement**

The government submits the attached supplemental Exhibit, which is intended to accompany its Response Opposing the Defendant's Motion for Compassionate Release or, Alternatively, Request or Recommendation for Home Confinement. The attached Exhibit is the December 6, 2006 article by Mara Shalhoup, *Hip Hop's Shadowy Empire (Part I)*, on Demetrius Flenory and the Black Mafia Family. The government is in the process of recovering any and all law enforcement reports regarding the allegations included in this article about Rashannibal "Prince" Drummond. Due to the age of the reports, they are not available digitally. However, the government is making efforts to acquire hard

copies of any and all law enforcement reports and will produce them as soon as they are obtained.

Respectfully submitted,

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s/Dawn N. Ison

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Dated: May 4, 2020

CERTIFICATE OF SERVICE

I hereby certify that on May 4, 2020, I electronically filed the foregoing document with the Clerk of the Court using the ECF system, which will send notification of such filing to:

Wade G. Fink
Attorney for Demetrius Flenory

s/Dawn N. Ison

DAWN N. ISON

Assistant United States Attorney

Dated: May 4, 2020

Hip-hop's shadowy empire

"Big Meech" Flenory and the Black Mafia Family were hip-hop royalty. But investigators say they had a darker side. *Part 1 of 3*

BY **MARA SHALHOUP**

Published 12.06.06

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Editor's note: For more details about BMF, as well as notes describing the sourcing of the story, click on the "Deep Background" link at the end of each section.

Demetrius "Big Meech" Flenory doesn't just walk into the club. He arrives.

The first sign he's coming: the cars. They coast to the curb like supermodels down a runway. Bentleys and H2s, Lambos and Porsches. And, when the crowd swells to full ranks, tour buses. In front of clubs from Midtown Atlanta to South Beach Miami, the streetlights bounce off the million-dollar motorcade, and it's blinding.



info

About this story

Creative Loafing Senior Writer Mara Shalhoup learned about the Black Mafia Family in late 2004 -- when a source told her there might have been ties between the murder of Rashannibal "Prince" Drummond and BMF.

For this three-part series, she interviewed more than a dozen on-the-record sources, reviewed documents in 14 court cases and police investigations, and scoured Internet chat rooms, message boards, MySpace pages and DVD magazines. The DVDs served as a window to Demetrius "Big Meech" Flenory's interactions with his crew and are the basis for observations on his body language and general demeanor. More sourcing information can be found in footnotes to this story, [available here](#).

News intern Frank Reddy assisted in her research.

Next, the crew. As Meech likes to say, all members are family: "Everybody moves like brothers. Everybody moves as one." But as with any entourage, there's a definite hierarchy. Pushing into the crowd (if that was possible), you'd first find the guys hovering on the fringes, moving with a slightly menacing sway. Go deeper, and the vibe starts to change. Guards come down. Egos edge up. Keep going and you encounter a steady calm. The aura is one of jaded confidence and quiet control. That's when you know you've reached Meech. "All Meech did was walk in the spot," one woman posted on an SOHH.com message board, "and panties got moist."



David Stuart

THE BOSS: Demetrius "Big Meech" Flenory made himself a legend.

Of course, his seemingly impenetrable cool can be challenged. There are some things Meech doesn't tolerate. And one of those things would take place on Nov. 11, 2003.

It would be "the big one," the very event that Meech -- as well as jittery Buckhead residents -- had long feared. Though for different reasons.

The Buckhead bar district had suffered in recent years from a spell of well-publicized violence. The most notable crime was the post-Super Bowl stabbings for which Baltimore Ravens linebacker Ray Lewis was arrested (and, aside from a misdemeanor, acquitted). That was three years earlier, outside Cobalt Lounge.

About a block away, near the corner of Peachtree and East Paces Ferry, a nightclub of similar glitz and stature was earning its name. Chaos was one of the "it" clubs. Shaquille O'Neal and Eminem had partied there. And Monday's hip-hop night was the club's biggest draw. Hundreds of people would show up on what, for other clubs, was the slowest day of the week. At Chaos, the only thing slow about Mondays was the line.

On that particular night, you couldn't walk along the club's lacquered wood floors, you couldn't lean against its exposed brick walls or grab a seat on its minimalist leather sofas without catching sight of Meech's guys. Anthony Jones must have known that. Yet Jones, better known to the masses as "Wolf" -- and more importantly, as Wolf-Who-Is-P.-Diddy's-Former-Bodyguard -- did something that stood a good chance of starting an all-out war. Wolf got rough with his ex-girlfriend. And she wasn't just any ex-girlfriend. She was an ex-girlfriend who was hanging out with Meech's crew.

Even then, the crew was known as a force that shouldn't be crossed. And that goes double for Meech. He was rumored to have built a powerful empire with skills picked up 20 years earlier on the streets of Detroit. And he was fiercely protective of the "family" that helped him along the way.

Meech stepped in and told Wolf to quit fucking with the woman. Wolf's next mistake was to ignore the demand. But before Meech had much of a chance to react, club security stepped in, and Wolf was bounced.

Meech and his boys went back to doing what they were known for doing -- ingesting an obscene amount of champagne and spending an even more obscene amount of cash. It was only 1:30, after all, and the bar wouldn't close for another two-and-a-half hours.

Wolf, banished from the cozy confines of the club, stepped into the cool night and made his way toward the parking lot behind the building. He called his friend Riz, whom he'd known since they were kids growing up in the Bronx. And he began to wait.

[For deep background on the above section, [click here](#)]

Toward the end of 2005, Debbie Morgan was finally getting her life back together. It hadn't been easy, but she'd found a distraction. Her goal was to open a restaurant on April 1, a little more than three months away. There were permits to obtain, gas lines to run, a counter to build, windows to replace, menus to print. On top of that, her daughter -- her baby, the youngest of four -- was pregnant. So she had that to think about, too.

The restaurant would serve the recipes Debbie grew up with in eastern Jamaica: curried goat, grilled plantains, barbecue tofu, jerk chicken. Like the food, the work was nourishing. And though the idea of making her deadline was starting to seem improbable, the countdown gave her a way to fill the hours. It offered an escape.

Debbie felt like she'd been aging lately, though it wasn't evident in her singsong lilt and sparkly black eyes. With her cropped hair and petite frame, she looked more like a pixie than an overworked restaurateur. But the past was weighing on her. She couldn't stop the constant loop in her head, the one that reminded her of what happened in the summer of 2004 to her son.

Rashannibal "Prince" Drummond was a sweet boy, a big kid who threw big parties. (His 22nd birthday celebration the year before lasted two days.) He was the type who tried to be everywhere all the time, wherever the action was. And on July 25, 2004, he and his friends wound up at a club in Midtown called the Velvet Room.

It was 4 a.m., and last call had come and gone. That left little for Prince and his friends to do but hang out in the parking lot. There was a fleet of high-end cars parked there that night, and a crew of guys climbing into them. One of the cars nearly ran over Prince.

From there, it quickly escalated to the part that Debbie tried to forget.

After she got the news about her son, she laid in bed for months. Through the haze of grief, bits and pieces of what had happened seeped in. Her nephew, who'd been with Prince that night, awoke from his coma three weeks after the incident. He remembered very little of what happened. Others were piecing together more.

Debbie would learn from investigators that they believed the men in the parking lot already had been attracting attention, and not just because of their fancy cars. Atlanta Police, DEA agents and Fulton County prosecutors had heard earlier rumblings about a crew and its alleged leader, Demetrius "Big Meech" Flenory. There had been another incident, in Chaos' parking lot, eight months before. And by the summer of 2004, money that would later be traced back to the men had been confiscated in traffic stops from Georgia to Missouri to Texas -- first \$140,000, then \$425,000, then \$720,000. Drugs linked to the crew were also seized: 17 kilos of coke in Flagstaff, Ariz., followed by 27 kilos in Crawford County, Ark., followed by a whopping 100 kilos -- with a street value of \$9 million -- outside St. Louis.

Investigators reached the conclusion that the men responsible for what happened to Prince might not be mere street thugs. They might be part of something big, something organized, something called the Black Mafia Family.

[For deep background on the above section, [click here](#)]

In the fall of 2004, two Atlanta rappers happened to brush shoulders at Walter's, a shoe store downtown. Gucci Mane was passing out CDs and offered one to an impressive-looking guy loaded with diamonds. Young Jeezy took the CD and complimented Gucci on his skills; he'd already heard some of the up-and-comer's tracks.

Though the rappers came from different territories -- Gucci from Atlanta's east side and Jeezy, by way of Macon, from the Old Fourth Ward -- they shared similar backgrounds. And both had been effective in channeling their street experiences into more professional ones.

Jeezy, however, was the bigger name. The 27-year-old had risen from Macon mixtape hawker to Atlanta hip-hop royalty. He was a street-level entrepreneur who had sold tens of thousands of mixtapes through his indie label, Corporate Thugz Entertainment. Around that time, he was busy flooding the streets with his record, *Trap or Die*. And thanks to a logo that likened him to a menacing snowman, Jeezy had cemented his ties to the street. (On the streets, "snow" is cocaine and the "snowman" a dealer.)

An affiliation with the Black Mafia Family didn't hurt, either. Jeezy wasn't shy about showing up on camera flanked by BMF members and saying things such as, "This is my muthafuckin' homeboy. It's love. It's family, dog," or dropping verses such as, "You don't want me to get the streets involved, better yet make a call and get Meech involved (yeah BMF)."

Though Meech had launched a record label earlier that year, Jeezy's affiliation with him stopped short of the label's roster. He would ink a deal with Def Jam Records instead. Thanks to the infusion of funds from Def Jam, Corporate Thugz Entertainment would be better equipped to cultivate Jeezy's own stable of artists, which included the rapper Slick Pulla, the group Blood Raw, and if all went according to plan, a trio from Macon called Loccish Lifestyle.

Gucci wasn't looking to join CTE's ranks when he ran into Jeezy at the shoe store. He'd already signed with Atlanta-based Big Cat Records. But that didn't mean the two rappers couldn't collaborate. The next day, Gucci showed up at Jeezy's studio with a track he'd been toying with, a song called "Icy." Jeezy laid down a few verses, and Gucci said he paid him for his work. It was a coup for the more underexposed artist to have a guy like Jeezy contributing to the track.

The camaraderie, however, was short-lived.

To say that someone is "icy" is to imply he's heavy with diamonds. The term applied to Jeezy that day at Walter's, and it applied just as much to Gucci when it came time in April 2005 to shoot the video for "Icy." On the set, he wore a blue-and-yellow, diamond-studded "Jacob" (as in a \$50,000 watch designed by New York hip-hop jeweler Jacob Arabo) and a 37-carat pendant that spelled the words "So Icy" in \$40,000 worth of diamonds.

"Icy" also happened to describe the hostilities that formed between the two rappers after the song became a surprise hit. In the spring of 2005, Gucci and Jeezy had a bitter -- and rather public -- falling out.

Gucci claimed that once "Icy" was hot, Jeezy wanted to use it on his soon-to-drop album, *Let's Get It: Thug Motivation 101*. Jeezy's attorney claimed that was bullshit; Gucci was just looking to drum up press. As if to make his feelings on the matter abundantly clear, Jeezy released a "diss song" slamming Gucci -- and placing a bounty on his \$40,000 necklace: "I want that muthafuckin' bullshit-ass icy chain," Jeezy sneered on "Stay Strapped." The title of the track doubled as a threat. If Gucci wasn't already carrying a gun, he ought to start.

Gucci was quick to fire back. In his response, "Round 1," which featured fellow Big Cat artist Black Magik, Gucci rapped, "Jeezy can't make a hit with a Louisville Slugger," "You're a thug imposter, you deserve an Oscar," and "Put a dress on, nigga, you Meech's bitch."



Tommy Boy

STAY STRAPPED: Atlanta rapper Gucci Mane received a warning from his nemesis, Young Jeezy, to carry a weapon.

By then, however, Jeezy appeared to have turned his attention elsewhere -- to Loccish Lifestyle's Henry "Pookie Loc" Clark, Carlos "Low Down" Rhodes and Shannon "Luke" Lundy. Jeezy was interested in signing the group to CTE. The deal appeared to be moving along.

But in May 2005, when Luke and Pookie Loc headed to Atlanta from Macon to meet with CTE, one of them would be diverted. Something would go wrong. And an unwitting Gucci Mane would find himself back in the picture.

[For deep background on the above section, [click here](#)]

To understand the story of Big Meech, you must first understand that the Black Mafia Family was two things: an alleged drug crew called BMF and a legitimate company called BMF Entertainment. And Meech was believed to be the leader of both.

At BMF's height, investigators in a half-dozen jurisdictions had reason to suspect that the crew was one of the nation's major drug-trafficking organizations, moving hundreds of kilos of cocaine a month. Federal prosecutors would estimate that BMF pulled in tens of millions of dollars annually -- at least \$270 million since the organization got its start.



DOUBLE EXPOSURE: In the summer of 2005, the covers of BMF Entertainment's magazine *The Juice* featured Meech on one side and Young Jeezy on the other.

An enterprise of that size pretty much guarantees that its leader could have anything money could buy. But in 2004, Meech had his sights on new territory. He wanted to become a credible name in hip-hop.

In March of that year, an entity distinct from the alleged drug crew, a record label and promotion company called BMF Entertainment, was incorporated. With Meech as CEO, BMF Entertainment proceeded to throw some of the most opulent parties Atlanta has ever seen (replete with elephants, ice sculptures and painted, naked women). It bankrolled a \$500,000 music video, "Still Here," by the label's sole artist, Bleu DaVinci. It published a glossy lifestyle magazine, *The Juice*, that

featured Meech and Jeezy on opposite covers. And it built tight allegiances with rappers who benefited from BMF's ascent as much as BMF benefited from theirs.

BMF Entertainment was a legitimate business, trafficking a commodity that's unique to the hip-hop industry. It wasn't cocaine or records. It was street cred. Rumors of drugs and violence, and the buzz surrounding BMF Entertainment's parties, made BMF purveyors of the ultimate hip-hop fantasy.

BMF Entertainment had found its niche. And Big Meech had a new calling: He was the master marketer of hip-hop hype.

To keep the buzz going, though, BMF Entertainment had to constantly outdo itself. The parties had to be more resplendent, the crew's cars more expensive, the champagne more plentiful. And the money that paid for the ice sculptures and Bentleys and cases upon cases of Perrier Jouet obviously wasn't coming from record sales. In its race to keep up appearances, BMF Entertainment drew the wrong kind of attention.

Investigators quickly concluded that the company was more than an overexposed business with a shameless name. They were uncovering evidence that though BMF Entertainment operated legitimately, it was funded by the drug proceeds of the Black Mafia Family -- and that the family was more like an

actual mafia than common sense would have you believe. After all, why call yourself a mafia if you're actually a mafia?

According to the feds, Meech and his brother Terry "Southwest T" Flenory (who allegedly held down BMF's L.A. hub) were the organization's dons. And the mob they ran was much like the ones in the movies. The Flenory brothers instilled an almost unshakable loyalty among the men and women who served them. A blanket of silence -- a true "mafia code", as one observer described it -- remained wrapped around the enterprise. Dishonor was the ultimate sin. And Meech was held up as a kind of demigod.

Yet Meech failed to take into account that investigators might find him as intriguing as those in the hip-hop scene did. The DEA had begun to suspect as early as 2000 that a crew that would later call itself BMF was moving mass quantities of coke through Atlanta, Detroit and L.A. And in the fall of 2003, local law enforcement began piecing together the crew's violent proclivities. Two months before Meech and Wolf crossed paths at Chaos, Atlanta Police investigated a home invasion that turned up some suspicious evidence.

On Sept. 7, 2003, two men were robbed in a townhouse off Boulevard by invaders who appeared to know what they were after. One of the men shot one of the invaders, which brought police to the scene. When officers arrived, they found a safe the size of a small room inside the townhouse. And in a tight passageway flanking the safe, they found a lone shoe and a single kilo of cocaine.

Detectives suspected that the safe had housed far more drugs -- probably not long before they arrived. And they believed there was a link between the men who lived in the townhouse and a previously unknown group called the Black Mafia Family.

Rand Csehy, a former Fulton County senior prosecutor who headed the BMF investigation for the DA's office, remembers thinking, "There's no way we have this black mafia running through the city." But the evidence he and other investigators would soon gather -- through the use of surveillance and wiretaps, and advanced by a couple of strokes of pure luck -- appeared to prove him wrong.

Within two years, investigators would link BMF to a group of unresolved killings and other violent acts. And many of those crimes weren't exactly low-profile. Among those affected were luminaries such as P. Diddy, Bobby Brown and Mayor Shirley Franklin.

One thing's for certain: All the allegations against the Black Mafia Family -- the accusations of drug-trafficking, the intimations of violence, the claims that BMF Entertainment was financed with dirty money -- have served the singular purpose of sharpening the BMF myth. The family might be dismantled now, but the myth lives on.

The brand has survived the product.

[For deep background on the above section, [click here](#)]

It was after 4 a.m. and Chaos' owner, Brian Alt, was running the night's totals. Mondays at the club were good money. Customers were known to spend big on hip-hop night. It was an environment well-suited to Meech's habits.

Among Meech's distinguishing characteristics is his insistence that every guy in the crew be given his own bottle of Cristal or Perrier Jouet -- even when the crew numbers 50 or more. It's one of the obvious ways he builds allegiances, but it's not the only way.

Meech grew up far from extravagance, amid the scourge of crack that pervaded southwest Detroit. He and his brother, "Southwest T," allegedly joined the game early, working on the street level in high school and slinging \$50 bags of crack. When Meech was 20, he was busted with several thousand dollars' worth of cocaine, for which he was sentenced to probation. For the next 18 years, though he was arrested several times, he would avoid another conviction.

In that time, he became a legend in the Atlanta and Miami party scenes. He was seen in a Cadillac one day, a Lamborghini the next, and not long after, a Bentley. He handed out pendants with "BMF" spelled in diamonds to members of his crew. He lived in houses where the monthly rent rivaled some starting salaries. And he took people with him.

It wasn't just to the after-parties at the Buckhead Westin presidential suite, either. Meech's relationship with his crew -- from his bodyguards to his promoters to his label's singular artist -- was rooted in seduction. There were VIP rooms and beautiful girls and all kinds of money to be spent on whatever you could imagine. And Meech would be in the middle of it, his hand resting on your shoulder like the father you never had, the one who lets you drive the car your real father could never afford, the one who takes you everywhere with him, wherever the business is. "I'm a good leader," Meech said a few years back in Miami. "So I got good people that follow."

The philosophy worked for him. His crew's loyalty was like armor. It very nearly made him impenetrable. The crew had his back, always.

The confrontation in Chaos' parking lot was no exception. When Meech and company poured out of the club in the early morning hours of Nov. 11, 2003, they found Wolf and his friend Riz waiting. Wolf had positioned himself in uncomfortable proximity to the Cadillac Meech had driven to the club. And he had a gun.

About three hours earlier, Alt's security team had given him a heads-up that Wolf had gotten aggressive with a woman, and the incident had escalated. That wasn't unusual; Mondays had gotten so charged that, unlike other nights of the week, Chaos patrons had to pass through a metal detector.

Alt believed he had diffused the situation. He had told Wolf it would be better if he left, and Wolf left without a fight. So when Alt got the news shortly after 4 a.m. that there was a disturbance in the parking lot, he knew it was bad, but he didn't think Wolf was involved.

There were gunshots outside. Lots of them.

Alt raced to the parking lot behind the club. When he got there, he found a bartender, a security guard and two off-duty medics attempting to keep the two men lying on the ground alive. One of the men made it to the hospital. The other didn't.

Riz was dead. A gun lay at his side.

At Grady Memorial, Wolf was rushed inside. He had suffered several gunshot wounds to the chest. Within minutes, he was dead, too.

Back at the crime scene, one of the officers working the double homicide, Atlanta Police Investigator J.K. Brown, got a call. The woman on the line had been transferred to him from 911. She said she knew who one of the shooters was. She saw him reach into the waistband of his pants and pull a pistol. By her estimation, he fired at least seven times. As she ran, she heard more shots. She said the people involved had a lot of money. They had a lot of drugs. And she told Brown that he didn't know what he was getting into.

She would not give her name. She said she was scared for her life.



CL file

CLUB CHAOS: Meech and his crew crossed paths with P. Diddy's former bodyguard "Wolf" at Buckhead's Chaos.

Before the sun came up, police managed to pinpoint the suspect whom the woman had described. It turned out he was an easy catch.

In the early morning hours not long after the incident, two men showed up at North Fulton Regional Hospital. One of them had been shot in the foot. The other guy's injury was more serious. He'd been shot in the ass. And unlike his friend, he wouldn't be getting off so easily.

Atlanta officers picked up both men at the hospital and brought them down to police headquarters for questioning. After interviewing the man with the foot injury, police released him. They charged the other man with the murders of Anthony "Wolf" Jones and Lamont "Riz" Girdy.

Big Meech was in big trouble.

[For deep background on the above section, [click here](#)]

Eight months later and four miles down Peachtree from Chaos, a flood of people was pouring out of the Velvet Room. While security guards were working crowd control in front of the club, Prince, his cousin and two of their friends were working the crowd out back. Or at least trying to. They were vying for the attention of some girls when a small motorcade of high-end cars started leaving the club. A Porsche SUV nearly backed into Prince.

Prince tapped the side of the Porsche. "Yo homeboy," he called out to the driver. "You hittin' me." The driver, a chubby guy with a goatee, jumped out. The rest of the crew was close behind. An eyewitness at the scene would later place Meech among them.



Courtesy Debbie Morgan

FALLEN PRINCE: Rashannibal "Prince" Drummond was attacked in the parking lot of the Velvet Room in Midtown.

For the last few months, Meech had been waiting for the prosecution's next move in the Wolf and Riz case. He'd only just been cleared of house arrest. Under such circumstances, it's usually advised to keep a low profile. What happened behind the Velvet Room was anything but that.

Prince and his friends said they didn't want trouble. But the crew formed up anyway and started swinging.

A few minutes later, a chain of rapid gunshots rang out. One of Prince's friends dropped to the ground, rolling along the pavement toward the rear end of another friend's car. He couldn't see his friends, but he saw the crew running off in different directions. He jumped up and started chasing one of them.

That's when he noticed Prince's cousin on the ground. He stopped short and ran to him instead. Crouching close to his face, he realized that no, the cousin hadn't been shot. But he'd been beaten, badly. Both his eyes were swollen shut. His left eyelid and cheek had been cut. He was not coherent. And he would not wake up for a while.

Where was everyone else? He looked up, scanning the parking lot.

All he saw was Prince.

He started running, again, but before he could get to Prince someone grabbed him from behind -- club security. What took them so long? The fleet of luxury cars was speeding out of the parking lot by the time off-duty cops working crowd control made their way out back.

He started yelling for an ambulance and wouldn't stop. When the uniformed officers showed up, they locked him in the back of a patrol car. He was still there when the ambulance came.

The paramedics didn't even try to help Prince. They just put a sheet over him.

[For deep background on the above section, [click here](#)]

Before Loccish Lifestyle had officially formed, its three members decided to test their talent. They came to Atlanta in 2000 for a freestyle rap competition at the Atrium. Low Down, Luke and Pookie Loc didn't even have a song ready, Low Down recalls, "just a beat from somewhere, and the name."

The group's name refers to a way of life on the streets of Macon -- a lifestyle that Low Down likens to that of the Crips. "We had good chemistry," he says. "That's probably what did it. We was all on the same tip."

The Macon trio that came to Atlanta without a song managed to take home the prize. They spent the next five years putting out two albums on their own and building their name on the street. Several of Loccish Lifestyle's tracks got heavy play on local radio and in the hip-hop clubs. The sound was moody and introspective -- and the lyrics unapologetic. "Trying to muse on how we're living," is how Low Down sums up the music. Loccish Lifestyle's single "Ridin' High" puts it more bluntly: "I'm gettin' high as I wanna be," "ain't no stopping me," and "don't blame me, nigga, blame the gang."

The group had been hustling for five years when Jeezy, whom they knew from his Macon days as "Lil Jay," wanted to make them an offer. Loccish Lifestyle wasn't big in Atlanta's hip-hop scene. But a deal with CTE might change that.

Yet Low Down was holding out. He wasn't exactly opposed to CTE's offer; he just wasn't yet convinced it was the right move. Luke and Pookie Loc were more enthusiastic. When the two of them checked into the Marriott Courtyard downtown in May 2005 to go over some details with CTE, they were eager to sign. But before the deal was official, Pookie Loc would be diverted.

He had been in trouble before. But as far as Low Down was concerned, Pookie Loc's past didn't make an impression against the daily realities that go with the lifestyle. "If you know him for being wild, I guess you could say he was being wild," Low Down says. "If you know him for being cool, he probably was cool."

As for what happened shortly after Loccish Lifestyle landed in Atlanta, Low Down expresses similar stoicism: "The situation is what it is. I mean, shit happens."

The situation would plot Pookie Loc against Jeezy's nemesis, Gucci Mane. And it would put Loccish Lifestyle's deal on indefinite hold.

On May 10, 2005, Gucci went with a friend to the Blazin' Saddles strip club down on Moreland Avenue. After a while, they decided to head with one of the strippers, a woman named Foxy, over to her house. They weren't there long when company arrived.

Five guys rolled in. One had a set of brass knuckles. Another had duct tape. Several had guns. Their intentions did not appear to be good.

The guy with the knuckles punched Gucci in the head. One of the other guys pistol-whipped his friend. Someone said something about killing them.

Gucci saw his chance. "Stay strapped," he'd been warned.

He aimed and fired.

[For deep background on the above section, [click here](#)]

Part II of "BMF: Hip-hop's shadowy empire" -- traffic busts in Missouri, wiretaps in Atlanta, and a double homicide with a connection to the mayor's son-in-law, can [be found here](#).

To comment further on this story, [please go to Part III](#).